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SPISE, CSF's Flagship Regional STEM Program, Concludes

SPISE (Student Program for Innovation in Science and Engineering) is offered for 4 weeks each summer by the Caribbean Science Foundation to the brightest 16-18 year old students interested in pursuing careers in science and engineering. This year, 18 students from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago were selected from 66 applicants. The program was conducted using the facilities of the UWI, Barbados, and the students were challenged with classes that included university-level calculus, physics, biochemistry, entrepreneurship and Mandarin, and hands-on projects in under-water robotics and renewable energy/electronics.

SPISE is intended to nurture and groom the next generation of technology entrepreneurs in the Caribbean, in an effort to assist with the economic developmental issues facing the region. SPISE not only achieves this through the subjects offered, but also through career seminars which give the students more awareness of the tremendous diversity of science-related jobs and careers. In addition, SPISE offers workshops which coach the students on how to optimize their chances of admission with financial aid to the world's top universities. As a consequence, students from previous SPISE classes are now studying at top universities, including Stanford, MIT, Harvard, Columbia, University College London, the University of North Carolina, Florida Institute of Technology, Trent University and UWI.

SPISE concluded on Friday August 14 with final project presentations by the students, which was open to the public. The audience included: Dr. DeLisle Worrell, Governor of the Central Bank of Barbados; Dr. Hon. Esther Byer, Minister of Labour, Social Security and Human Resources Development of Barbados; Ms. Jacqui Cuke of the Sandy Lane Charitable Trust; Dr. Tony Rossomando of Alexion Pharmaceuticals; Roger Beckles of Emera Caribbean; Jeff Barrus of the United States Embassy for Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean and the OECS; other business professionals and several parents of the students.

During the event, the robotics, renewable energy, and entrepreneurship projects were showcased, and for the Mandarin presentation, the students sang "Jasmin Flower" in Mandarin (one of the most popular and mainstream traditional Chinese folk songs) which speaks out against corruption by praising the fair and pure Jasmin. The robotics projects required the SPISE scholars to build a basic model of an under-water robot, and then to use innovation and creativity to endow it with movable arms that could collect balls in a water-filled tank. For the renewable energy presentation, wind turbines were built by student teams, each with its own unique blade design. The designs competed against each other as the audience got excited and involved in how different blade designs affected the effectiveness of wind turbines in producing electricity. The entrepreneurship class concluded with a business plan competition in which groups of students pitched their unique and personalized product and business plan to the audience. Several members of the audience were given CSF money to invest in the team of their choice, and the winner was decided by the amount of money invested. The products conceived by the students include a portable handheld printer; Haztag, a GPS device to locate any household or miscellaneous object; a wrist band to replace intrusive diabetes monitors; malleable shoes that harden as they are put on but soften when off for easy storage; a component for portable computer and communications devices to allow for built-in projection; and a mobile app to write essays for you on-the-go.

The CSF is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization with headquarters in Barbados and representatives in several other Caribbean countries. Key partners in the SPISE are the University of the West Indies Cave Hill campus, the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) and Sagicor. Please visit <http://caribbeanscience.org/projects/spise.php> for more information about the SPISE, or contact Prof. Cardinal Warde at warde.csf@gmail.com or 1-617-699-1281. Donations to the CSF can be made at <http://caribbeanscience.org/donation/>.

SPISE 2015 institutional sponsors include: ACBarbados, Bishop Anstey High School East & Trinity College East (Trinidad and Tobago), Cable and Wireless Communications, CADSTI International (USA), CADSTI-SE (Atlanta, USA), Caribbean Development Bank, Caribbean Examinations Council, Central Bank of Barbados, Delta Airlines, Dominica Electricity Services Ltd, Dominica Secondary Schools Supporters Association (UK), Emera Caribbean (Barbados), Grenada Co-operative Bank, Guyana Ministry of Education, Kerosene Lamp Foundation (St. Vincent), Massy Foundation (Trinidad and Tobago), Nevis Island Administration, Nation Publishing Company Limited (Barbados), PETNA Foundation (Grenada), Rossomando and Reiss Families (USA), Sandy Lane Charitable Trust (Barbados) St Lucia Electricity Services Ltd, Trafalgar Travel (Jamaica), Trinidad & Tobago Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development, UNESCO, U.S. Embassy for Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean and the OECS. Individual sponsors include: Ryan Allard, Diane Beckles, Eugene Gittens, Cheryl Greenidge, Carl Grant, Earl Long, Jay Mandle, Sandra Mcloed, Dodridge Miller, Monica Miller, Lisa Nicholson, Sekazi Mtingwa, Adam Raffoul, Ernie Stapleton and Colin Walcott.

SPISE 2015 Photos



SPISE 2015 students from 10 Caribbean countries



Students pipetting ELISA samples in biochemistry laboratory



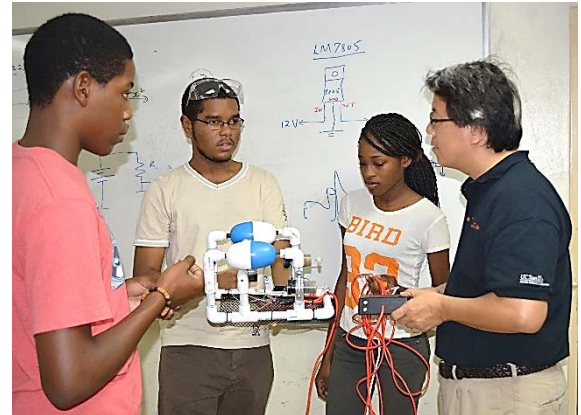
Students pitching business plan to audience



Students discussing robot arm design



Students fastening blades to their wind turbine



Students explaining under-water robot to Dr. Robert Sah



Students setting up wind Turbine



Students with robot at tank